

**FamiliesUSA****The Voice for Health Care Consumers**

July 17, 2000

The Honorable John D. Dingell
2328 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-2216

Dear Congressman Dingell,

We congratulate you on the introduction of your bill, the Family Care Act of 2000, which gives states the option to provide parents of children enrolled in the Medicaid and CHIP programs with health insurance. We believe that your bill is a crucial next step in addressing the problem of our nation's uninsured, and we offer our unequivocal support.

By covering parents through CHIP, the Family Care Act could provide health insurance to over four million previously uninsured Americans. We believe this is a cost-effective and efficient way to provide quality healthcare to low- and moderate-income working families. Children of CHIP-enrolled parents will be automatically enrolled at birth, but, equally importantly, research has shown that children are more likely to have health coverage when their parents are insured. This means that the Family Care Act could, in effect, cover many more Americans than the estimated four million. Additionally, the expansion of coverage to legal immigrant children and pregnant women addresses the needs of two particularly vulnerable groups.

Again, we applaud your ongoing leadership in tackling the problem of the uninsured, and we support this important legislation. Please let us know how we can help you to enact this bill into law.

Sincerely,

Ronald F. Pollack
Executive Director